United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ International Court of Justice rules today in The Hague that circumstances of the case presented by Libya are not such as to require the exercise of its power under article 41 of the statute to indicate provisonal measures.

+ Secretary-General arrives in Beijing for meetings with Chinese Prime Minister and Foreign Minister; delivers opening statement at forty-eighth session of Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

+ Spokesman for United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia denies press reports regarding a possible move of UNPROFOR headquarters from Sarajevo.

+ Special Envoy on Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance, to leave for that country tonight.

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One day before the 15 April deadline set by the Security Council for an air and arms embargo against Libya, the International Court of Justice ruled in The Hague, by 11 votes to five, that "the circumstances of the case are not such as to require the exercise of its power under article 41 of the statute to indicate provisional measures". Japan, the United Kingdom, Poland, Italy, the United States, China, Norway, the Commonwealth of Independent States, France, Guyana and Venezuela voted in favour of not invoking article 41; Algeria, Sri Lanka, Madagascar, Nigeria and Judge ad hoc for Libya voted against.

The Court also stated that Libya, the United States and the United Kingdom, as members of the United Nations, were obliged to accept and carry out the decision of the Security Council in accordance with article 25 of the Charter.

Libya had requested the Court to enjoin the United Kingdom and the United States from taking any action against Libya calculated to coerce or compel Libya to surrender the accused individuals to any jurisdiction outside of

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Libya; and to ensure that no steps are taken that would prejudice in any way the rights of Libya with respect to the legal proceedings that are the subject of Libya's application.

The Court further stated that, while it had not been called upon to determine definitely the legal effect of Security Council resolution 748 (1992) setting the deadline for compliance with the Council's requests for cooperation, the rights claimed by Libya under the 1971 Montreal Convention "can not now be regarded as appropriate for protection by the indication of provisional measures".

The air and arms embargo imposed by the Security Council against Libya will take effect tomorrow night - one minute past midnight - unless Libya agrees to comply with Council resolution 731 (1992) requesting that country's cooperation in establishing responsibility for the terrorist attacks against Pam Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali arrived this morning in Beijing to attend the opening meeting of the forty-eighth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). He was scheduled to meet later today with the Prime Minister of China, Li Peng, and will meet with Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, tomorrow.

In his address to the opening meeting of the Commission, the Secretary-General told participants that the end of the cold war had raised hope and optimism and provided a unique opportunity for the international community "to turn to the task of laying a basis for balanced and sustained development in all regions of the world". A major challenge of the 1990s for the region was to eradicate poverty and illiteracy, he added.

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The spokesman for United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), Fred Eckhard, said today that there was no basis for reports regarding a possible move of UNPROFOR headquarters from Sarajevo. On the contrary, he stressed, contracts were being entered into, personnel being brought in and deployment in United Nations protected areas was proceeding according to plan.

Speaking at a press briefing in Sarajevo today, Mr. Eckhard said UNPROFOR military observers had reported "relative quiet" in the protected areas for the past 24 hours, and previously troubled areas around Osijek and Dubrovnik had been relatively calm for the past 48 hours. However, he noted, there had been reports of continued coercion and expulsions being dealt with by UNPROFOR civilian police and military. There had also been two incidents involving Canadian companies, forced to temporarily abandon locations in western Slavonia when mortar rounds had landed some 200 metres away. The two companies

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returned to their original positions today, Mr. Eckhard said.

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Postponing his departure by 24 hours, the Special Envoy on Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance, will be leaving for Belgrade tonight, via Geneva. From the Serbian capital Mr. Vance is expected to travel to Sarajevo "tomorrow night or Thursday".

Mr. Vance would spend three to four days in Yugoslavia. He will travel to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the framework of the statement made by the Security Council President on Friday, 10 April, inviting the Secretary-General to dispatch urgently to the area his Personal Envoy to act in close cooperation with representatives of the European Community in their current efforts to stop the fighting and to bring about a peaceful solution to the crisis in the area.

Mr. Vance will return to New York via Portugal. In Lisbon, he is scheduled to meet on Saturday with the Foreign Minister of Portugal, who is the current Chairman of the European Community.

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